Province of
British Columbia
Ministry of Lands,
Parks and Housing

ELLISON MASTER PLAN

MARCH 1980

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This plan is approved as a development plan, rather than a master plan, because of the limited resource data and analysis. Considering the extensive development, minimal opportunities for additional development and the small size of the park, the conclusion presented would likely not be changed as the result of a more comprehensive planning process.

105-06600/

RECOMMENDED: _____
G.F. Macnab

APPROVED: George Trachuk Feb 24/81
G. Trachuk

Thompson-Okanagan Region
Park Operations Branch
Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division
Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing
Kamloops, B.C.

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C. J. Velay
Director
Operations Branch

The "Ellison Master Plan" prepared by Mr. M. Turner, is recommended to you for transmittal to the Executive Committee for approval.

M. Downs,
Acting Regional Director

Recommended:

J. W. Moore,
District Superintendent

D. Thompson,
Regional Systems Planner

Approved:

C. J. Velay,
Director

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A. INTRODUCTION

Ellison Provincial Park is located 16 km south of Vernon on the east side of Okanagan Lake (Figure 1). Established through purchase in 1962, this 200 hectare park was the major provincial park in the North Okanagan until the establishment of Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park in 1975.

The history of recreational use since the park's establishment and development reflects the popularity of Ellison Park. Although four other day-oriented public lake accesses lie between Vernon and the park, including Paddlewheel Park and Kin Park, the popularity of lake-oriented day trips commonly results in the two 50-car parking areas being filled by noon.

Figure 1 LOCATION MAP

A. INTRODUCTION - Continued

The general lack of private facilities on North Okanagan Lake and the inherent natural attributes of the site have resulted in the 54-site campground at Ellison showing one of the highest party night per site use (117 party nights) of any provincial park. Half of the campground attendance results from campers outside of British Columbia.

The park is also used by boaters as one of the few public marine sites on North Okanagan Lake. Winter use for nordic skiing and snowshoeing is becoming more popular.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

Looking south from Otter Bay to the boaters' beach

B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Within the context of the North Okanagan Valley, the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division will provide a diverse system of parks to serve the recreational needs of tourists and local residents. The system will continue to emphasize highly accessible, lake-oriented situations, evenly distributed throughout the valley and affording a variety of recreational opportunities at parks with multi-feature recreation focii. The provision of increased overnight accommodation will be a priority.

Based on the existing recreation features of Ellison Park, on the existing use patterns within the park as well as outside the park, and the goals and objectives of the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division in the North Okanagan Valley, it is the concept of this park to provide and maximize diversified lakefront park opportunities for the residents of the North Okanagan and their visitors.

These intensively managed lakefront opportunities on North Okanagan Lake will include easy-access and group camping, beach-oriented day use, boat access day use, picnicking, hiking, interpretatation, and ski touring.

C. PARK RESOURCES STATEMENT

Existing lake-oriented opportunities include both boat and car access beach use, swimming, water-skiing and picnicking.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

The park lies within the wetter portions of the Ponderosa Pine-Bunchgrass biogeoclimatic zone. The variation in topography from bedrock outcrop to silt and gravel terraces reflects a distinct variation in both vegetation and wildlife found in the park.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

The rocky headlands are ideal for hiking and viewing. Four archaeological sites have been identified in these areas, probably used because of the protection they offered.

The flatter benches above the lake have been developed for camping, and picnicking. Figure 2 outlines the major features of the park.

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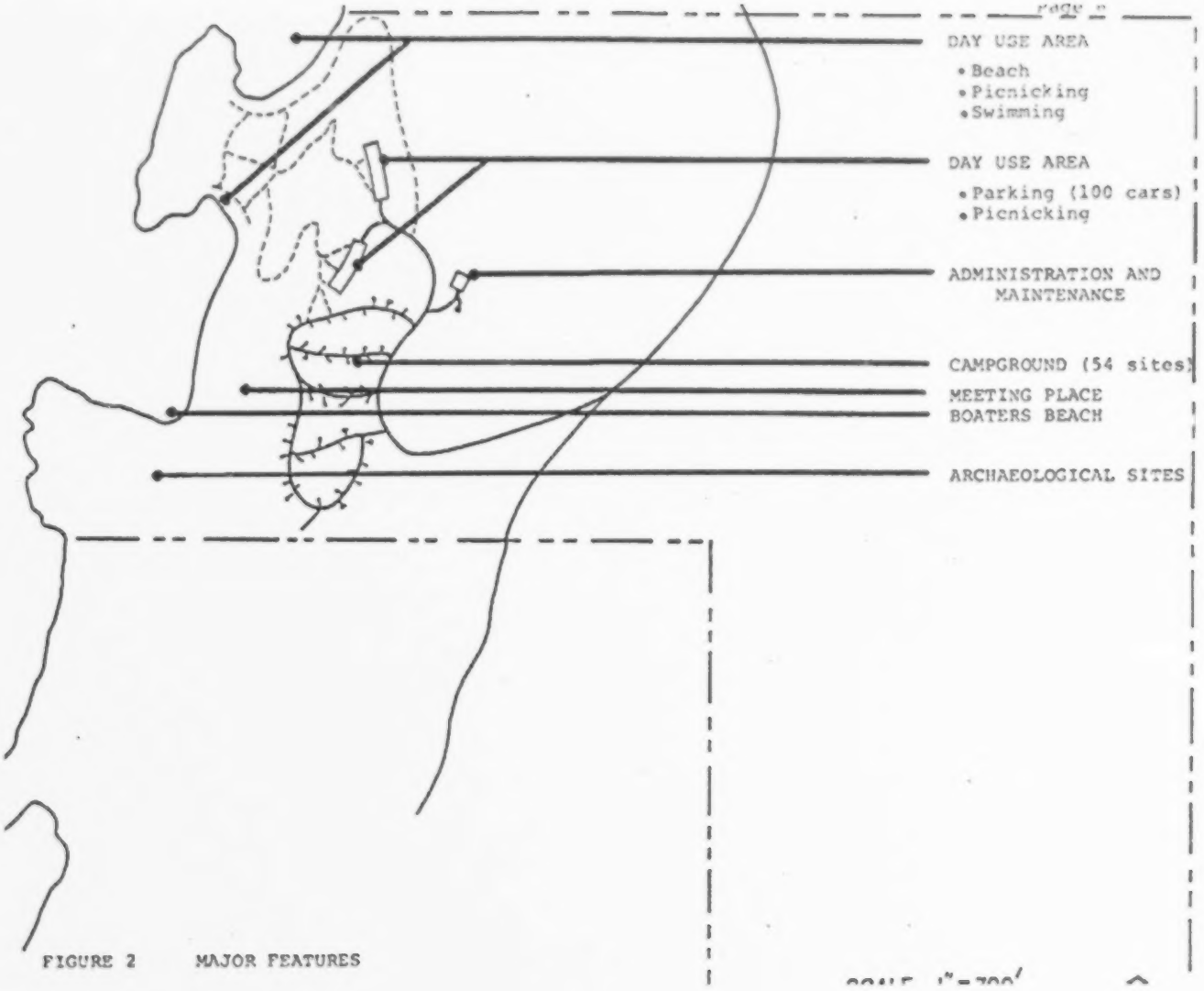

FIGURE 2 MAJOR FEATURES

D. ZONING

Figure 3 illustrates the zoning plan for the park.

The **Development Zone** includes the area where construction of facilities is necessary to enhance or enable public recreation for day use picnicking, parking, beach use or camping.

Both a day use and campground component make up the development zone and for the most part reflect the current facilities available with only three exceptions.

1. Based on existing dry beach and the lineal footage of parkland on Okanagan Lake, the two beach areas could support another 200 day users with an expanded 65 car parking lot and the brushing back of the vegetation on the beach.

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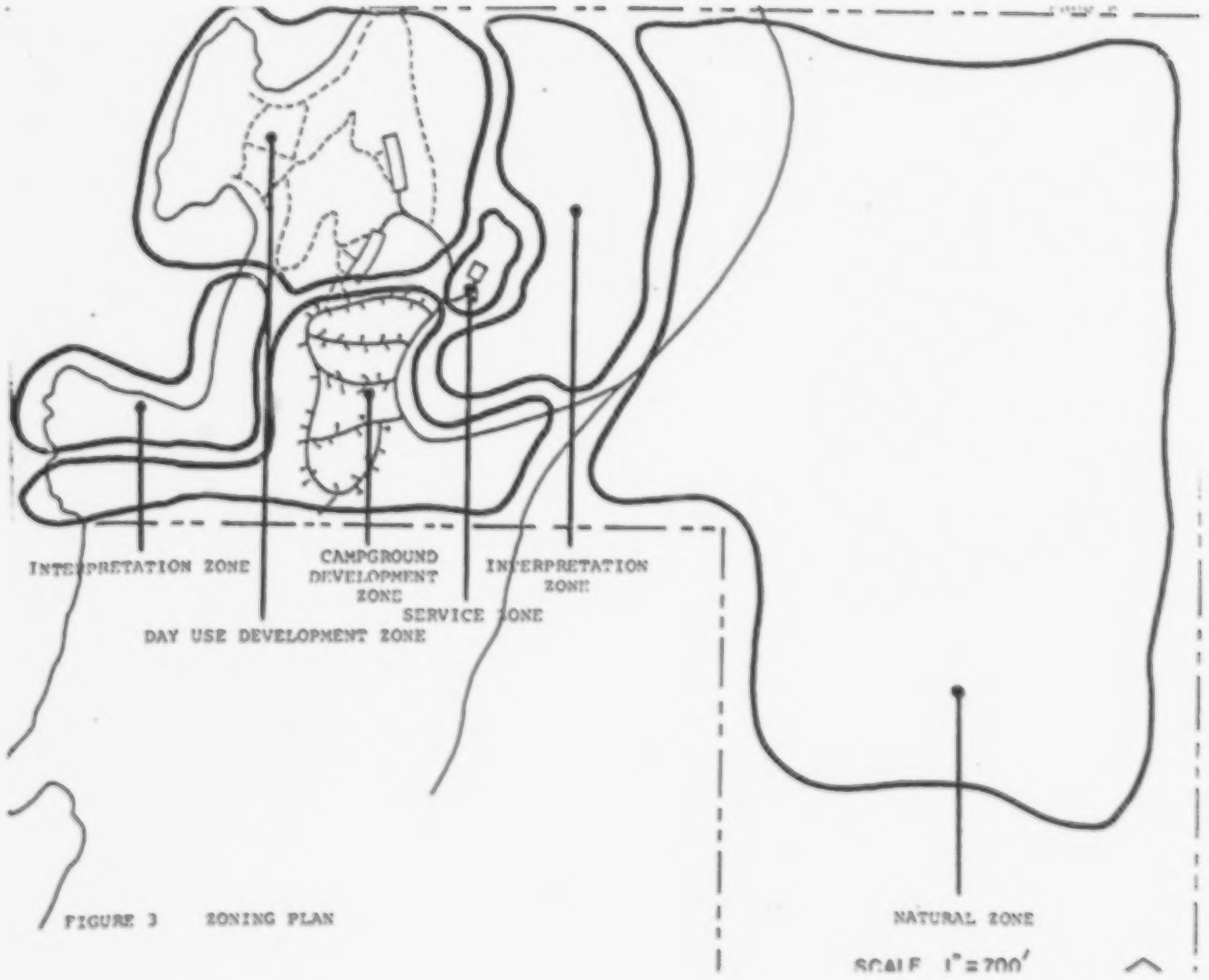

FIGURE 3 ZONING PLAN

2. As shown earlier, the campground area for Ellison is extremely well used averaging some 100+ party nights each year. The upper bench would allow for campground expansion of some 25 standard sites.

3. Ellison has served an educational function in the North Okanagan for some time catering to a myriad of groups including schools, clubs, service organizations and the Canadian Forces Base at Vernon. Within the context of the area, overnight group campgrounds are non-existant; hence Captain's Cove has been designated as a group site.

The **Service Zone** indicates the location of buildings and service yard necessary for the maintenance and operation of this park. A residence is also included as part of the management operation for Ellison.

The **Interpretation Zone** is divided into two areas that are of particular interest. The most westerly area includes both the archaeological sites and the rocky headland environment associated with Okanagan Lake. The easterly area is typical of the upland of Ellison Ridge. Both areas lend themselves towards self-guided and guided trail expansion on the human and natural history themes of the North Okanagan.

The **Natural Zone** makes up the remainder of the park including the easterly upland of Ellison Ridge. This is essentially a passive zone, retained as habitat with development restricted to existing access trails for hiking, snowshoeing or nordic skiing.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

ROCKY HEADLANDS FRONTING OKANAGAN LAKE

E. GENERAL MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

Ellison Provincial Park will be managed in an effort to maximize diversified lakefront opportunities for the residents of the North Okanagan and their visitors. The present development provides most of these types of opportunities. A modest increase in opportunities will be developed which reflects the limited development potential of the remaining resources and the intervening publicly accessible day use and camping opportunities outside the park.

F. SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PLANS

1. Resource Management Plans

Normal resource management procedures will continue at Ellison.

2. Visitor Management Plans

In an effort to maximize both the number and type of opportunities at Ellison, the following developments are proposed.

The easy access campground will be expanded by approximately 25 sites and the related service facilities. The circulation pattern in the existing campground will be monitored to reduce the propensity for day use disturbance.

The day use areas on the lake will be landscaped in an effort to provide more dry beach area; associated with the development will be an additional 65 car parking lot with expanded picnicking and sanitary facilities.

The rugged topography tends to limit the orientation of the visitor; hence a comprehensive signing system of facilities will be implemented.

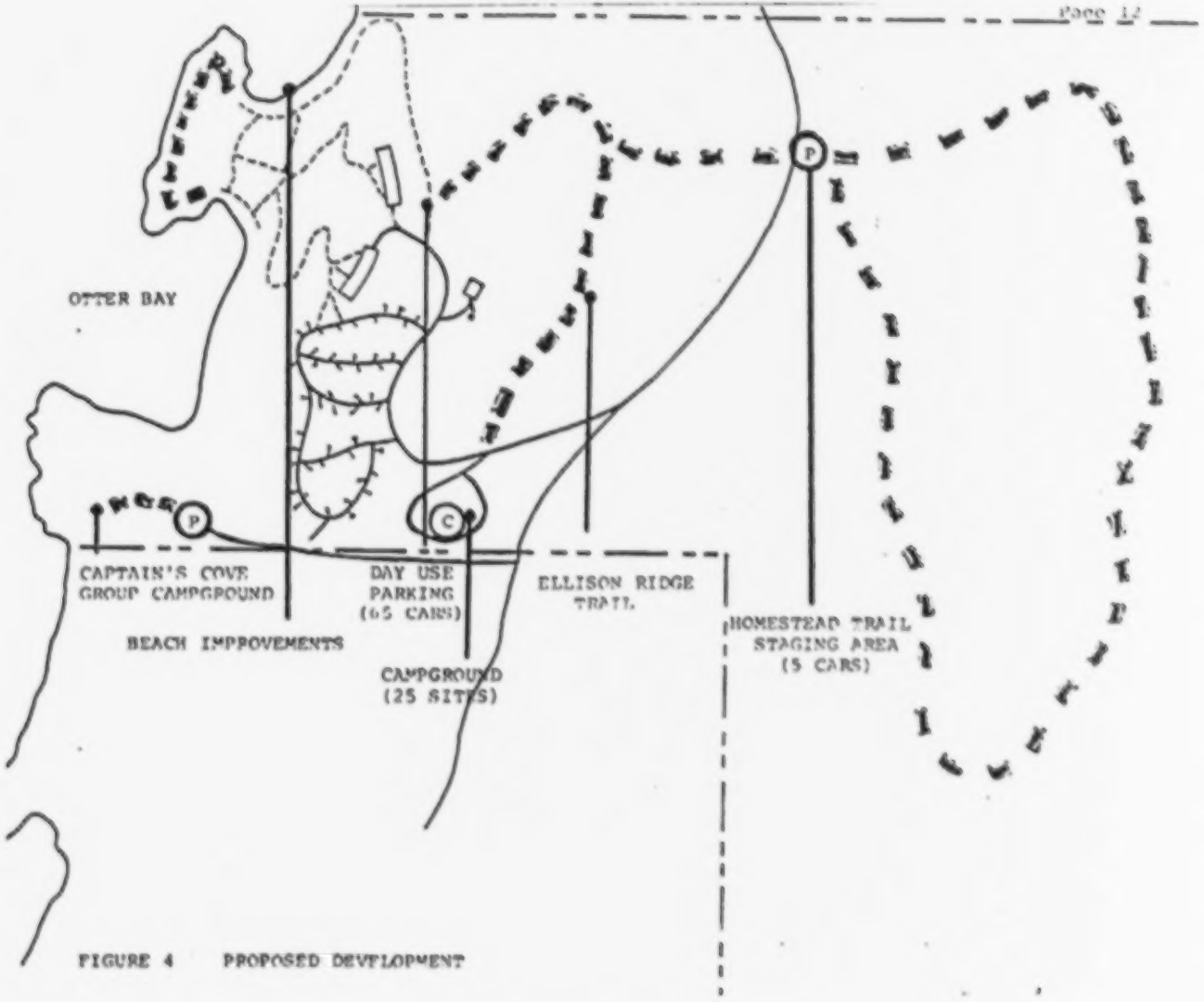

FIGURE 4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Trail development for both hiking, nordic skiing and nature and historic interpretation will occur on the peninsula north of Otter Bay and on Ellison Ridge in an effort to provide a variety of opportunities.

A group campground, capable of accommodating 50 people, will be constructed at Captain's Cove. A shelter and parking area will be included in the design. A gated road will be constructed along the existing right-of-way on the park boundary to provide group vehicle access to the groupsite. Figure 4 outlines the proposed development.

3. Administrative Plans

The current staffing levels and management techniques will be maintained.

G. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Based on priorities elsewhere in the Thompson-Okanagan Region, the proposed development will take place in the following order:

PHASE I

1. Construction of 25 additional campsites with service facilities.
2. Provision of signage for existing facilities and trails.
3. Construction of Otter Bay and Ellison Ridge trails.

PHASE II

1. Construction of additional 65 car day use parking area with service facilities.
2. Construction of Captain's Cove group campground.
3. Construction of 5 car parking area for the Homestead Trail on Ellison Ridge.